

WHAT TO DO AFTER A WILDFIRE

The State of Arizona and your local governments sincerely regret the terrible tragedy and loss you have experienced due to the fire.

Fires are very traumatic events. Most people have little experience dealing with the aftermath of a significant fire. This brochure includes information that may be helpful to you in this time of crisis. Remember that you are not alone when disaster strikes. Your neighbors, your community, local fire departments, your county and the agencies of the State of Arizona are available to provide you aid and comfort to the best of their abilities.

RESIDUAL FIRE RETARDANT

Red fire retardant is a mixture of water, fertilizer, and red pigment. If you notice residual red fire retardant, use a mild detergent and brushes to scrub the dried residue. Rinse with clean water. Following up with pressure washing may be helpful, but will not be as effective as scrubbing. Most common complaints are mild skin and eye irritation.

DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

Here is a **checklist** of documents you may need to replace if they are destroyed or missing.

Social services and welfare clients: notify your caseworkers if identification cards for check cashing, medical care, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) have been destroyed.

Birth/death records replacement assistance: visit www.azdhs.gov/licensing/vital-records or contact:

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| • Birth certificates | • School records |
| • Passports | • Title to deeds |
| • Driver's licenses | • Military discharge papers |
| • Social Security cards | • Stocks and bonds |
| • Citizenship records | • Automobile titles |
| • Credit cards | • Warranties |
| • Checkbooks/statements | • Wills |
| • Medical Records | • Military identification cards |
| • Medical insurance cards | • Bank books |
| • Insurance policies | • Payment books |
| • Income tax records | • Animal registration papers and vaccination records |
| • Marriage/divorce papers | |
| • Prepaid burial contracts | |

Arizona Department of Health Services
Office of Vital Records
1818 West Adams Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007
602-364-1300 or 1-888-816-5907

Passport replacement assistance: call the U.S. Post Office at 1-800-275-8777.

Marriage/divorce records: call your county records department.

Social Security Card information: call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213.

MONEY REPLACEMENT

Damaged paper money or coins may be redeemable. Mail money via **registered mail, return receipt requested.**

Department of Treasury, Bureau of Engraving and Printing
Office of Currency Standards • 1-877-874-4114

If your **U.S. Savings Bonds** are lost or damaged, contact the Federal Reserve Banks to request replacement:
Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis PO Box 291,
Minneapolis, MN 55480-0291 • 612-204-5000

TEMPORARY HOUSING

If your house is uninhabitable and you have no place to go, contact the American Red Cross by county:

- Central and Northern Arizona Chapter: Apache, Coconino, Gila, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal and Yavapai • 602-336-6660
www.redcross.org/local/az-nm/about-us/locations/central-and-northern-arizona.html
- Southern Arizona Chapter: Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Pima, Santa Cruz and Yuma • 520-318-6740
www.redcross.org/local/az-nm/about-us/locations/southern-arizona.html

IN DIFFICULT TIMES...

During stressful times of loss and uncertainty, do not hesitate to call one of the following regional behavioral health services:

- Central GSA – Mercy Care (formerly Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care) • www.mercycareaz.org • 602-222-9444
- North GSA - Health Choice Arizona (formerly Health Choice Integrated Care) • 1-800-322-8670
www.healthchoiceaz.com/health-wellness/behavioral-health
- North GSA - Navajo Nation • 928 -729-4012
www.navajo-nsn.gov/index.htm
- North and South GSA - Gila River Regional Behavioral Health Authority • www.grhc.org/bhs • 520-562-3321
- North and South GSA - White Mountain Apache Tribe
www.wmabhs.org • 928- 338-4811
- South GSA - Arizona Complete Health (formerly Cenpatco Integrated Care • www.azcompletehealth.com
1-888-788-4408
- South GSA - Pascua Yaqui Tribe • 520-591-7206
www.pascuayaqui-nsn.gov/index.php/behavioral-health-services

Note: GSA stands for Geographic Service Area.

For additional information, visit: <http://ein.az.gov>

WHAT TO DO AFTER A FIRE

Look in the Yellow Pages under fire and water damage restoration. When severe damages occur to buildings, it may be worthwhile to have professionals provide estimates associated with cleaning up costs.

Check with your insurance company to determine whether this type of service is covered by your policy and if the insurer will either accept billing from the restoration company or will reimburse you.

CALL YOUR INSURANCE CARRIER RIGHT AWAY

Don't settle claims or sign releases too quickly. Confirm they will take care of security matters, i.e., boarding up your property, or call your landlord, who can contact insurance carriers.

Take your time and make sure your agent knows of all your losses, since it may be difficult to recall everything at once. Much more laundry and cleaning might be necessary due to smoky odors and fine smoke particles than first expected.

Obtain a copy of the fire report from your local fire department, since it may be required by your insurance agent

LOST POWER AND UTILITIES

Don't attempt to turn on the gas yourself. Firefighters will immediately shut off gas and electricity. Utilities will remain off until the utility company determines it is safe to restore service.

Don't run wet appliances until a professional has checked them. Damage, improper grounding or short-circuiting may cause property or safety hazards.

FOOD AND WATER SAFETY

Keep cold foods cold by keeping the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. A refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will keep the temperature for approximately 2 days (1 day if it is half full) if the door remains closed.

Discard the food, if it may have been held above 41° F for more than 4 hours.

If you are on a public water system, boil your water unless your water company announces that the water is safe to drink.

Check your well. A wildfire can negatively impact the quality of your well water. Drink from an alternate source of water (e.g. bottled) until you have tested the water for possible water contaminants. Information regarding private wells is available at www.azdhs.gov/wellwater.

WATER DAMAGE

Check for water beneath vinyl flooring. It can cause odors, warp the supporting wood, and eventually cause the floor to lift. Call a flooring dealer for suggestions to remove or loosen the remaining adhesive without damaging the covering. After you remove the covering, let wood dry thoroughly before replacing.

Allow rugs and carpets to dry thoroughly. Lay them flat and expose to warm, dry, circulating air. Fans help speed drying. Even though the surface may appear dry, moisture remaining at the base of the tufts can cause a rug or carpet to rot. Clean dried throw rugs by beating, sweeping, or vacuuming, and then shampooing. For more information, call a carpet dealer or installer.

Assess damaged wood furniture and fixtures since they may be salvageable.

- Clean off mud and dirt. Scrub with a soft brush and mild cleaning solutions
- Wipe dry with a soft cloth
- Dry wood thoroughly to prevent mold and decay; don't dry in sun to prevent warping and twisting
- Open doors, windows and drawers; use fans to circulate air
- Tips to remove white spots or film

Rub the wood surface with a 4/0 steel wool pad dipped in liquid polishing wax. Wipe with a soft cloth and buff

Rub wood surface with a cloth soaked in ½ cup household ammonia per ½ cup water solution; wipe dry and polish with wax, or rub with a cloth soaked in a solution of ½ cup linseed oil

To remove mildew stains from clothing, wash the stain with soap and water. Rinse and dry in the sun. If still stained, use lemon juice and salt; or try one tablespoon bleach to one pint lukewarm water. Test colored garments before using any treatment.

NEVER mix chlorine bleach with anything other than water or laundry detergent. Chlorine bleach mixed with ammonia or other chemicals can result in toxic fumes with serious, potentially fatal results.

FIRE AND ASH DAMAGE

Wood ash is a combination of nutrients and minerals left behind by burned wood. The ash from vegetation can be messy, but not harmful. However, ash from a home or garage that has burned may be harmful, because of chemicals and consumer products in the home or garage. Wet the ash before removing it to avoid creating a potentially harmful dust.

Wash cooking utensils, such as pots, pans, and flatware with soapy water, rinse, and polish with a fine powder cleanser. Clean copper and brass with salt sprinkled on a vinegar-saturated cloth.

SMOKE DAMAGE

Wash smoke odor and soot from clothing. This formula is safe for bleach-safe clothing:

- 4-6 teaspoons laundry detergent
- 1 cup household chlorine bleach
- 1 gallon water

Mix well; add clothes; rinse with clean water; and dry well.

PROPANE AND HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS

Ensure that your propane tanks are secure and not leaking. Check to make sure the lines have not been damaged by fire. If the fire may have damaged the tank or lines, don't use the propane and call your propane service provider.

Properly dispose of household chemicals if the original containers or labels are damaged. Do not transfer chemicals to new containers.